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Poland

Product Brief

Seafood Products

2001

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Report Highlights:
Poland's seafood sector becomes more import dependent as investments shift to seafood processing in light of EU accession. With an estimated 10 percent annual increase in Seafood sales, direct U.S. export potential remains strong.

Includes PSD changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
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Executive Summary

The Polish seafood industry has undergone major restructuring over the past decade. Consolidation among firms is increasing with three firms controlling 75% of the market for processed seafood products. At the same time, demand has outpaced local production and the Polish seafood processing industry has become dependent on imports for raw materials. Norway is the leading supplier contributing 70% of raw materials. However, with an estimated 10% annual increase in seafood retail sales in Poland, the potential remains strong for U.S. companies to enter this market.

Catches and Production

Poland's overall fish catch, deep-sea and Baltic, are declining due to new regulations regarding fishing zones and over-fishing. Total catches for the year 2000 were approximately 210,000 tons or 40% less than in 1995, 45% from deep-sea catches and 55% from the Baltic. Deep-sea catches are performed mainly in the Bering Sea resulting in 70% of total catches being the Alaska pollock. Other deep-sea catches include Krill (20%) from the Antarctic. Poland hopes to revive deep-sea catches by establishing bilateral agreements with countries possessing their own fishing zones. Currently, Poland's only bilateral agreement is with the Russian Federation in Okhotsk Sea, an exclusive economic zone. Unfortunately, continued reductions in catch quotas issued to Polish firms in the region make it unprofitable. Polish fishing zones now extend over 200 miles into the Baltic Sea with catches comprised 60% of sprout, 20% of cod, and 15% of herring.

Polish aquaculture production (common carp, grass carp, and rainbow trout) was 32,000 tons in 1999, a 30% increase compared with1990. Continued increases in rainbow trout production is expected over the next few years. Freshwater catches are 4,600 tons annually (34% bream, 18% roach, 10% pike) derived mainly from lakes (270,000 ha) and some rivers (30,000 ha).

Poland's Seafood Import Market

Poland imports of seafood have been increasing and were 245,000 tons in 2000 ($250 million), 15% more than the annual domestic catch 210,000. The majority of imports are for raw material (chilled or frozen) or fresh fish and fillets for further processing. The main species imported for both categories has consistently been Herring and Mackerel. Currently, fish imports from Norway account for approximately 70% of total imports due to lower tariffs (EFTA). However, Norway's dominance in the import market will decrease after EU accession of Poland. A 30% per year tariff reduction agreement for fish imported from EU countries, awaiting ratification by Polish and EU members' parliaments, will result in full trade liberalization of non-processed fish by Jan 1st , 2004. The first 30% tariff reduction scheduled Jan 1st, 2002 will make imports from other EU member states more favorable (i.e. Ireland, Germany, Great Britain).

The growth in the U.S. share of Poland's imports is most evident in the frozen fish fillets category. Decreased catches of Alaska Pollock, traditionally preferred on Polish market, has resulted in an increasing substitution of herring and hake fillets for processing. Imports of US frozen fish fillets (mainly herring) in the first quarter of 2001 have rebounded, following a bottoming-out in 2000, and may reach 300,000 tons by year-end.

Poland’s Processed Seafood Market

The restructuring and privatization of the seafood industry has resulted in shifting from off-shore to on-shore investment over the past decade. Seafood used in further processing constitute 70-80% of all imports. The canned fish market is consolidated in three major firms possessing 75% of the market share. There are 388 registered fish processing plants of which 44 possess EU export licence numbers. A significant reduction in the number of processing firms is expected over the next few years given fierce competition in the market. The expansion of investment in highly processed value-added fish products (i.e. fish sticks) made mainly from herring fillets could lead to continued growth for imports. Poland has a per capita consumption rate for seafood of 6- 6.5 kg which is substantially lower than world and EU averages, 13 kg and 16 kg respectively. Consumption is expected to increase 0.5-0.75 kg. per capita over the next five years which will equate to 18,000- 27,000 tons of additional demand.

Seafood is sold in over 1,200 stores ranging from specialized seafood stores as well supermarkets and hypermarkets. The variety of processed fish products available in Polish hyper- or supermarkets are greater than the selection in U.S. stores. The largest hyper-markets include a wide selection of live fish (in tanks) for purchase resulting in a comparatively vast amount of store square feet dedicated solely to seafood sales. Seafood, especially fish, is sold fresh, frozen, and processed.

The primary exports from the United States to Poland are herring and mackerel. Recently, Polish company’s have begun to import U.S. chum salmon for further processing and salmon products, valued at $230,000 annually. The Polish import market for high quality raw materials will remain strong due to continued decreasing domestic supplies and increasing demand potential in central and eastern consumption markets.

Poland’s Export Market

Poland’s export market for whole fish, fish fillets, and other non-canned fish products remains fairly consistent at 50,000 tons per year. Over the last decade, the export market has grown primarily in the canned and processed fish sector, valued at $100 million annually. However, strong competition in the processing sector coupled with collapse of the Russian market in 1998 will continue to bankrupt many firms and force the remaining to find new markets. Fish sales directly from on-board have been discontinued since the implementation of EU sanitary regulations. However, with abundant port access and central location, Poland is a favorable transhipment point of raw materials destined for Central and Eastern European fish processing markets.

Table I. Poland, Seafood Imports 1996-2001

Year	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2000*	2001**
Whole Fish (*in tons)*	96,360	117,796	131,642	125,097	125,128	N/A	43,077
Fillets/Fish Meat (*in tons)*	100,771	100,687	119046	100,772	120,087	33,036	33,225
Total Imports *(inc. Other seafood)*	209,194	228,014	258,734	233,386	245,215	N/A	77,125

All figures in Metric Tons; *January-March (1st quarter) 2000; ** January-March (1st quarter 2001)

Table II. Poland, Import of US Raw Materials for further processing or redistribution

Year	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2000*	2001**
Frozen Whole Fish (*in tons)*	206	1293	1045	328	311	N/A	0
Fish Fillets (*in tons)*	21	48	176	595	2	N/A	72

All figures in Metric Tons; *January-March (1st quarter) 2000; ** January-March (1st quarter 2001)

Table III. Poland, Export Market 1996-2001

Year	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2000*	2001**
Whole Fish (*in tons)*	34,102	30,713	23,700	24,012	21,495	N/A	4,860
Fillets/Fish Meat (*in tons)*	16,448	28,914	21,215	21,384	25,004	7,604	6,645
Fish dried, salted, smoked, flours, meals, pellets *(in tons)*	6,000	4,800	3,500	4,037	4,536	831	1,088
Total Exports *(inc. Other seafood) (excl. Processed)*	58,803	66,377	50,685	51,774	51,035	N/A	12,740

Total Exports Processed Fish Products *(tons)*	32,513	35,386	38,189	33,107	35,848	9,461	10,518

All figures in Metric Tons; *January-March (1st quarter) 2000; ** January-March (1st quarter 2001)

POLFISH Trade Fair:

Poland hosts one of the largest seafood exhibitions in Central Europe bi-annually in Gdansk. The next POLFISH trade show is scheduled for June, 2003 in Gdansk, Poland. For more details concerning the Polfish Fair as well as to reserve space at POLFISH please contact:

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Guidelines and Regulations for Exporting Seafood to Poland

For a current list of guidelines and regulations regarding seafood exports to Poland, contact the USDA, FDA, and Department of Commerce.

All meat shipments to Poland must be accompanied by a health certificate issued by a government-approved veterinarian from the exporting country. Products also must bear a label in the Polish language with the date of production clearly stated. In addition, suppliers have to check with importers Polish standards regarding exported products. Poland has a set of quality standards published as Polish Norms. Each norm has its number and is available in the Central Library of Norms in Warsaw. The same norms are set for storage conditions of meat and meat products and validity of the products depending on conditions and temperature of storage.

One of the factors that plays a significant role in the competition of Poland's fish imports are existing import tariffs. A large portion of Poland's fish imports originate from Norway which, as a member of the EFTA (European Free Trade Agreement) is subject to much lower import tariffs than the general tariff for WTO members which applies to the United States. WTO members are subject to import tariffs of 5-25 percent for fish and fish products exported to Poland.

Seafood Importers

To obtain a list of seafood importers in Poland, contact the USDA in Washington D.C. or the Foreign Agricultural Service post in Warsaw, Poland.
Tel: 48-22 621-3926, Fax: 48-22 628-1172, E-mail: agwarsaw@fas.usda.gov

Current Tariff for Selected Seafood Products

CN Code	Name of product	WTO*	DEV	LDC	EFTA	Czech Romania Hungary Lithuania Latvia
Frozen fish						
30350	Herring					
30350001	from Jan.1- Feb.14	5**	3.5	0	0	0
30350005	from Feb.15- Feb.28	5	3.5	0	0	0
30350003	from Mar.1-June.15	15	10.5	0	0	0
30350007	from June.16-Sep.30	15	10.5	0	0	0
30350009	from Oct.1-Dec.31	5	3.5	0	0	0
30374	Mackerel					
30374100	from Jan.1-Feb.14	20	14	0	0	0
30374110	from Feb.15-June 15	10	3.5	0	0	0
30374200	from June 16-Dec.31	20	14	0	0	0
30372000	Haddock	15	10.5	0	1	0
30379110	Carp	10	7	0	0	0
30310000	Salmon	10	7	0	0	0
30379550	Alaska Pollock	15	10.5	0	1	0

* WTO applies to products originating from the U.S.
**All duties in percent.

WTO - WTO Member
DEV - Developing Countries
LDC - Less Developed Countries
EFTA - European Free Trade Agreement - Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland

CN Code	Name of product	WTO*	DEV	LDC	EFTA	Czech Romania Lithuania Hungary Latvia
Fish Fillets						
030410910	Herring	10**	7	0	0	0
030420510	Mackerel	15	10.5	0	0	0
030420330	Haddock	15	10.5	0	0	0
030410130	Salmon	5	3.5	0	0	0
030420550	Hake	15	10.5	0	0	0
030420850	Alaska Pollock	10	7	0	0	0

* WTO applies to products originating from the U.S.
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DEV - Developing Countries
LDC - Less Developed Countries
EFTA - European Free Trade Agreement - Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland

For further information contact the Foreign Agriculture Service in Warsaw, Poland.
Tel: 48-22 621-3926, Fax: 48-22 628-1172, E-mail: agwarsaw@fas.usda.gov

Previous reports on fish and seafood products:

GAIN Report # PL8032 - Poland : Fish market